(b) the rate at which private companies purchased wheat from the farmers and the shortage in procurement of wheat by Government as compared to the target;

(c) whether Government would increase the Minimum Support Price of wheat and increase the bonus, keeping in view the pathetic condition of farmers, continuous increase in production cost and the incidents of suicides being committed by farmers; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Wheat fixed by the Government of India for the wheat crop of 2005-06 and marketed in 2006-07 in Rs. 650 per quintal. A bonus of Rs. 50 per quintal over and above the MSP was given to the farmers. The farmers are free to sell their produce in the open market, including private companies, if a higher price is offered to them. The market prices of wheat in the major wheat growing States between April to June, 2006 (peak marketing season) were in the range of Rs. 650 per quintal to Rs. 1200 per quintal. A quantity of 92.26 lakh tonnes of wheat was procured by Food Corporation of India and State agencies during the marketing year 2006-07 as against the target of 162.07 lakh tonnes.

(c) and (d) The Government has already fixed the MSP for wheat at Rs. 750/- per quintal for the crop of 2006-07 to be marketed during 2007-08.

Security of railway passengers

*272. DR. PC. ALEXANDER: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the respective responsibilities of the State Police and the Railway Police for the security of the persons and properties of railway passengers;

(b) further measures which Government propose to take to ensure more effective security for railway passengers; and

(c) the measures proposed to be taken to ensure proper co-ordination between the police departments of the Railways and the State Governments and to enforce accountability of those responsible for the security of the railway passengers?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD):(a) According to Entry No. 2 of the State List of the Constitution of India. 'Police' (including Railways and village Police), is a State subject. Prevention of crime, registration of cases, their investigation and maintenance of law and order in Railway premises as well as on running trains are, therefore, the statutory responsibility of the State Police. The State Police have a separate wing called the Government Railway Police for dealing with all matters relating to law and order on the Railways. Prevention and detection of crime is the constitutional responsibility of the State Governments, and as such, Ministry of Railways has to depend largely on them for control of crime over Railways.

The Government Railway Police (under the State/Union Territory Governments) co-ordinate the security arrangements as per the requirements and levels of security threats, their nature etc. The Railways actively assist in aspects pertaining to the Railways in order to facilitate smooth train operations and transportation of passengers, parcels and goods in such situations.

However, to provide better security to the travelling passengers in trains and passenger areas, the Railway Protection Force Act, 1957 and the Railway Act, 1989 have been amended in 2003 to enable the Railways, through the Railway Protection Force - to effectively supplement the efforts of the State/Union Territory Governments in controlling crime on the Railways. As per amendment in the RPF Act, 1957 the RPF personnel have been entrusted the responsibilities of better protection and security of railway property, passenger area and passengers and for matters connected therewith with effect from 01.07.2004. The Railway Protection Force staff are being deployed to escort trains and are also deployed in the passenger area to augment the efforts of the State Police. By amendment in the Railways Act, Railway Protection Force have also been empowered to deal with certain minor offences affecting train operations such as Alarm chain pulling, roof travel, touting, ticket less travel, unauthorized entry etc. (except Subotage related offences under Sections 150 to 152) with effect from July 2004. The objective was to ensure that the State Police (Government Railway Police) get more manpower and time to handle heinous offences such as Terrorist activities, Murder, Dacoity, Robbery, Rape, Sabotage, Train Wrecking etc. under the provisions of Indian Penal Code, the Railways Act and other Laws of the land.

- 8000 vancancies in Railway Protection force are being filled on priority.
- Modern security gadgets are being procured on priority.
- Close Circuit Televisions and Cameras are being installed at sensitive/important Railway Stations.
- Skills of Railway Protection Force personnel are being upgraded by imparting training.
- Regular Exchange of intelligence between Railway Protection Force and State Police/Central and State Intelligence Units and Government Railway Police is being ensured

(c) The position in the sections, trains and stations affected by crime is periodically reviewed in the co-ordination meetings held by the officers of the Railway Protection Force with their counter parts of the Government Railway Police and the State Police. In these Meetings, the situation is reviewed and remedial measures are taken. The deployment of staff is modified from time to time depending upon the situation. Whenever there is any escalation in violent incidents in any section, all-out efforts are made in co-ordination with the State Police to control the situation by actively assisting them with additional man power and other resources. As for the accountability, Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police personnel found slack in the discharge of their duties are promptly taken up under Disciplinary proceeding and appropriate Laws.

Improving agriculture

*273. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIYA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has called for enhancing the outlays for agriculture in the Eleventh Five Year Plan, so that, State Governments are provided adequate funds, Strengthen infrastructure and help capital formation and investment in agriculture;

(b) if so, whether State Agriculture Ministers' conference was held on